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Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Senior-level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds" (JIU/REP/2000/3).

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SENIOR-LEVEL APPOINTMENTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS, ITS PROGRAMMES AND FUNDS

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ACRONYMS

ABSP	Advisory Board for Senior Postings
ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
APB	Appointment and Promotion Board
APC	Appointment and Promotion Committee
APPB	Appointments, Promotions and Postings Board
ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General
EOD	Entry-on-duty date
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HRS	Human Resources Service
ICC	International Computing Centre
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
JCGP	Joint Consultative Group on Policy
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
OCSS	Office for Conference and Support Services
OHRM	Office of Human Resources Management
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OPPBA	Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts
PAS	Performance Appraisal System
SRG	Senior Review Group
SSRC	Senior Staff Review Committee
UNAT	United Nations Administrative Tribunal
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDCP	United Nations Drug Control Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WFP	World Food Programme
WGUNS	Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OBJECTIVE, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE

To propose measures with a view to ensuring improvement in: (a) selection of the best qualified candidates ; (b) transparency of recruitment; (c) geographical distribution of senior-level posts; and (d) streamlining of relevant policies and procedures.

Article 101, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations stipulates that "[t]he staff shall be appointed by the Secretary-General under regulations established by the General Assembly." The General Assembly, in section I, paragraph 3, of its resolution 53/221 of 23 April 1999, emphasized that proposals on the reform of human resources management requiring an amendment of the regulations and rules or a departure from the provisions of its prior resolutions, should be submitted to the Assembly for its consideration and approval before their implementation.

A. Appointments of top echelon officials

Appointments to the Secretariat's top positions are of critical importance and fall under the discretionary power of the Secretary-General.[2] No standard recruitment or promotion procedures are applied in respect of these positions.

The Secretary-General reported that, with regard to senior-level appointments, he, as and when necessary, consults with an informal group of independent advisers established in 1997.[3] Subsequently, the Secretary-General expressed his determination: (*a*) to seek the widest possible spectrum of views in order to ensure that appointments made by him are of the highest calibre; and (*b*) to continue to benefit, for the same purpose, from consultations with Member States on such appointments.[3] The scope of the latter consultations needs, however, to be widened.

Recommendation I

The Secretary-General, prior to making appointments at the levels of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General, should consult thereon with Member States on a broader basis (see paras. 33-40).

The current Staff Regulations stipulate that "Appointment of Under-Secretaries-General and of Assistant Secretaries-General shall normally be for a period of five years, subject to prolongation or renewal."[4] This general provision does not include modalities relating to the appointment of the DSG and USG for IOS, nor does it specify a maximum term of office for top level officials.

Recommendation II

The General Assembly may wish to decide that staff regulation 4.5 should be amended to read as follows:

"Regulation 4.5:

"(*a*) The Deputy Secretary-General shall be appointed in the manner provided for in General Assembly resolution 52/12 B of 17 December 1997, Section A, paragraph 2, for a term of office which will not exceed that of the Secretary-General;

"(*b*) The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services shall be appointed in the manner provided for in General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, paragraph 5 (*b*) (ii), for one fixed term of five years without possibility of renewal;

"(*c*) Appointment of Under-Secretaries-General and of Assistant Secretaries-General shall normally be for an initial period of up to five years, subject to prolongation or renewal so that the total term of office should not exceed ten years;

"(*d*) Other staff members shall be granted either permanent or temporary appointments under such terms and conditions consistent with the present Regulations as the Secretary-General may prescribe;

"(*e*) The Secretary-General shall prescribe which staff members are eligible for permanent appointments. The probationary period for granting or confirming a permanent appointment shall normally not exceed two years, provided that in individual cases the Secretary-General may extend the probationary period for not more than one additional year." (See paras. 32-35 and 41.)

To date, no vacancy notices for top echelon posts are published, nor are relevant job descriptions established. More transparency in this area would lead to the broadening of the pool of candidates and, consequently, would facilitate the task of the Secretary-General in finding the best qualified person for any given post.

Recommendation III

The Secretary-General should advise in advance Member States of vacancies at the levels of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General as well as of responsibilities related to these positions and qualifications required from candidates (see para. 41).

B. Appointments to posts of Director (D-2) level

The importance of appointment to D-2 level posts cannot be over-emphasized. Constituting predominantly heads of divisions, the incumbents of these posts are often invested with the responsibility of managing dozens of officials. They are required to have a broad range of competencies and to exercise effective leadership of different kinds of specialists in a cross-cultural environment. The management culture in the United Nations Secretariat will not improve unless selection criteria as well as policies pertaining to and modalities for appointment of officials in this category are reviewed.

Recommendation IV

The General Assembly may wish to decide that the modalities of appointment to posts at the D-2 level should be as follows:

(*a*) In selecting candidates, whether internal or external, emphasis should be placed on identifying those who are achievement-oriented and have proven managerial competencies and leadership skills (e.g., strategic view; human relations; creative analysis and conceptual thinking; adaptability and flexibility);

(*b*) Newly-recruited staff at the D-2 level or holders of fixed-term appointments, selected for posts at this level, should be granted initial contracts for a period not exceeding five years;

(*c*) Not later than six months before the expiration of the initial contract of a staff member occupying a D-2 post, the position should be advertised both internally and externally;

(*d*) The incumbent should be allowed to present his/her candidacy for the post on the same basis as all other candidates, provided that performance evaluation reports for his/her service at the post are submitted together with his/her application (see paras. 42-44).

Recommendation V

The Secretary-General, in his report on the composition of the Secretariat, should provide information on appointments he has made at the D-2 level with indication of nationality, gender and type of contract granted (new or renewed) (see para. 45).

C. Geographical representation in senior level positions

Many Member States, in particular developing countries, continue to be inadequately represented in senior-level positions. Furthermore, there is still an imbalance in geographical distribution of these posts among developing countries.

Recommendation VI

The General Assembly may wish to draw the Secretary-General's attention to the continuing inadequate representation of many Member States, particularly developing countries, in senior-level posts and to request him to take measures aimed at improving this situation. It may also wish to invite the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, on these measures within the framework of his report on the composition of the Secretariat (see paras. 18-26).

In a number of its resolutions on human resources management issues, the General Assembly stressed that no post, including at senior-levels, should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States. This practice, however, continues.

Recommendation VII

The Secretary-General should pay particular attention to the repeated statements by the General Assembly to the effect that no post, including at senior levels, should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States (see para. 36).

D. Representation of women

Despite some improvement in gender balance in senior-level posts in the Secretariat over the last decade, the representation of women at the USG and ASG levels is still low (12.5 per cent in 1999). Progress in appointing women from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to senior level and policy-making posts is slow.

Recommendation VIII

The General Assembly may wish to draw the attention of the Secretary-General to the need to:

(*a*) Improve gender balance in posts at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels;

(*b*) Place special emphasis on better representation of women from developing countries as well as from countries with economies in transition in senior-level positions (see paras. 27-28).

E. Appointments to posts of Special Representative, envoy and related positions

The available data suggests that the principle of selecting officials as Special Representatives, envoys and appointment to related positions "on as wide a geographical basis as possible", recommended by the General Assembly in section III, paragraph 2, of its resolution 47/120, is still insufficiently applied. Furthermore, there are only two women (or 3.3 per cent) among the incumbents of these positions.

Recommendation IX

The Secretary-General should make more sustained efforts in order:

(*a*) **To apply the principle of selecting candidates to the positions of Special Representatives, envoys and to related positions on as wide a geographical basis as possible;**

(*b*) **To ensure at the same time a wider representation of these officials within geographical regions;**

(*c*) **To improve gender balance in these positions (see paras. 69-74).**

F. Appraisal of top-level officials in the United Nations Secretariat

The performance appraisal system (PAS), which was introduced in 1996 to evaluate the performance of staff members up to and including the Under-Secretary-General level, has been selectively applied to senior staff. Until the end of 1999, only one USG and one ASG had been appraised. Many staff at the Director and Principal Officer levels remain unappraised. In section VI, paragraph 1, of its resolution 53/221, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that PAS is applicable to all staff within the meaning of Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Recommendation X

The General Assembly may wish to request the Secretary-General to report to it biannually on the extent of the application of PAS to senior-level officials (see paras. 75-82).

G. Senior-level appointments in the United Nations programmes and funds

The geographical distribution of senior-level posts in the United Nations programmes and funds is imbalanced. In this regard the Secretary-General pointed out that the principles governing the recruitment of staff, which are derived from Articles 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations apply to all the staff of the secretariats of its subsidiary programmes, funds and organs with special status in matters of appointment.

Recommendation XI

The General Assembly may wish to call upon the executive heads of the United Nations programmes and funds to give greater importance to ensuring recruitment of staff at senior levels on as wide a geographical basis as possible (see para. 111).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Emphasizing the vital importance of senior-level appointments, the Secretary-General stated: "The appointment of senior officials by the Secretary-General is critical to the Organization's performance. The Secretary-General has to balance the professional, managerial and leadership qualities required to ensure high standards of performance; in few areas do the Secretary-General's responsibilities have a greater impact on the effectiveness and performance of the Organization than in making these senior appointments."[5]

2. In their recent statements, Member States have increasingly referred to the necessity of ensuring high standards of performance of United Nations senior officials, transparency of the relevant recruitment procedures, more coherent implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of high-level posts and achieving a better gender balance. Those concerns have been reflected in a number of resolutions that the General Assembly has adopted over the last several years.

3. Moreover, in 1996, the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System (WGUNS recommended, *inter alia*, that the "relevant bodies should request the external and internal oversight machinery to give early attention to ... [p]ractice and procedures for appointments at the senior level."[6]

4. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) considered that appointments at the senior level are not a suitable topic for an internal oversight body and would be more appropriately dealt with by an external oversight body.[7] In his official communication addressed to JIU in April 1998, the USG for IOS formally suggested that the Unit should prepare a report on this issue.

5. Given the above concerns and suggestions, JIU decided to prepare a report entitled "Senior-level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds" for submission to the General Assembly.

6. The present report consists of four chapters. Chapter I "Introduction" deals with the background and scope of the report, as well as with the methodology used for its preparation. Chapter II, on the basis of statistical information, considers overall trends in appointing staff to senior-level positions, geographical distribution of and representation of women at the relevant posts. Chapters III and IV review policies, procedures and practices for senior-level appointments in the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations major programmes and funds.

7. The preparation of the present report included the following stages:

- Examination of the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on personnel matters;
- Analysis of United Nations policies pertaining to appointments to senior-level posts;
- Interviews with representatives of Member States and Secretariat officials dealing with and/or responsible for recruitment and promotion to senior-level positions;
- Examination of files of the Senior Review Group (SRG) for appointments to D-2 posts and the Appointment and Promotion Board for appointments to D-1 posts for the last four years.

8. The Inspector is grateful to all those he had discussions with for their sincere and constructive cooperation and for sharing with him relevant information and ideas. He hopes that the present report to which they have contributed will be useful to Member States and the Secretary-General in their ongoing efforts to reform human resources management in the Organization and to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency.

II. SENIOR-LEVEL POSTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT: STATISTICS AND TRENDS

A. General

9. Traditionally, the senior echelon at the United Nations was regarded as consisting of the executive heads of the major United Nations programmes and funds (e.g. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, UNCHS, UNEP), the heads of departments and offices at the USG and ASG levels and Directors (D-2), as well as those officials who carry out diplomatic or "special representative" functions for the Secretary-General. At present, this echelon also includes the DSG, who holds rank equivalent to that of the executive heads of the major specialized agencies and the major United Nations programmes and funds, and, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A, also the staff at the Principal Officer (D-1) grade.

10. The above officials are responsible for implementing all the work programmes of the United Nations, for effectively using its budget, and for ensuring the quality, direction and morale of its international civil service staff. These are critically important functions.

11. United Nations official documentation does not provide all the necessary data on senior positions, thus preventing Member States from having a full picture in this regard and from tracing the relevant trends. Therefore, in its resolution 51/226, section III B, paragraph 3, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include information on representation of Member States at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat in future reports on the composition of the Secretariat. However, the information contained in his most recent reports on the composition of the Secretariat[8] is still incomplete. Thus, while presenting the overall figures on extrabudgetary posts, for example, it indicates neither the categories nor the total number of senior-level staff financed from extrabudgetary resources, nor the geographical distribution of these staff.

12. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) has repeatedly expressed particular concern with regard to senior-level positions in the Secretariat. ACABQ had requested the Secretary-General to provide information on the number of ASG and USG posts in the United Nations and its funds and programmes in 1987 as compared with 1997. In its second report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, ACABQ requested the Secretary-General to: (*a*) submit a report on the grading structure early in 1998; and (*b*) provide the necessary analysis and justification for the numbers of posts at each level and the resultant organizational structure.[9]

13. With regard to the senior management structure, WGUNS stated that the Organization should have a clear pyramidal structure and, to that end, proposed that the functions and number of USGs, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) and ASGs should be reviewed by the Secretary-General and streamlined, and the lines of authority and decision-making made transparent.[10]

14. To date, the ACABQ request has been complied only partially. The above proposal by WGUNS remains unheeded.

B. Overall statistics

15. In its second report on the proposed programme budget for 1998-1999, ACABQ noted a tendency towards increasing the number of USG and ASG positions, which against the background of decreasing that of junior-level posts, was distorting the grade "pyramid".[11]

16. The most recent report on the composition of the Secretariat suggests that, in 1995-1999, the total number of staff subject to geographical distribution was progressively declining from 2499 in 1995 to 2384 in 1998, with a slight increase in 1999 (2395).[12] The number of senior-level officials was decreasing from 1995 until 1997. In this period, the total number of staff at the D-1 level and above dropped from 331 to 308; that of the D-2 level and above, from 106 to 95; and ASGs and USGs, from 37 to 32. As a result of the subsequent increase in all these categories, the number of D-1 posts and above, in 1999, has reached 315, D-2 and above reached 108, and ASG and USG reached 40.

17. By virtue of General Assembly resolution 53/221 of 23 April 1999, the practice of showing the representation of staff according to major geographical groupings has been discontinued in favour of presenting such data by countries. The Inspector has, nevertheless, found it useful, before considering the country statistics for 1999, to make a brief analysis of the evolution of the distribution of senior-level posts by regional groupings during the 1995-1998 period.

18. The data presented in Table 1 suggests that, as of 30 June 1998, the largest number of senior-level posts (D-1 and above), was occupied by nationals of the Western European countries (82, including 10 posts of USG and ASG grades). The second in the rank was the region of North America and the Caribbean (64, including four USGs and ASGs). It was followed by Africa (58, including five USGs and ASGs); Asia and the Pacific (50, including 10 USGs and ASGs); Latin America (27, including eight USGs and ASGs), Middle East (18, including one USG), and Eastern Europe (13, including one USG).

19. In 1998, as compared to 1995, the number of senior-level posts encumbered by nationals of the North American and the Caribbean countries increased by three, that of Latin America by one, and that of Asia and the Pacific remained the same (50 posts). In the same period, the African region lost nine posts, the Middle East lost seven, Eastern Europe lost six and Western Europe lost one post.

Table 1: Staff at senior-levels in posts subject to geographical distribution, by region and grade (30 June 1995 - 30 June 1998)

	USG				ASG				D-2				D-1				TOTAL			
	95	96	97	98	95	96	97	98	95	96	97	98	95	96	97	98	95	96	97	98
AFRICA	2	3	2	2	4	3	5	3	12	12	10	14	49	48	45	39	67	66	63	58
ASIA & PACIFIC	4	5	5	7	2	2		3	7	8	8	11	37	34	30	29	50	49	43	50
EASTERN EUROPE	1	1	1	1		1			6	5	3	2	12	11	10	10	19	18	14	13
WESTERN EUROPE	7	6	6	8	1	2	2	2	23	22	21	20	52	57	55	52	83	87	84	82
LATIN AMERICA	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	5	5	3	4	3	16	16	17	16	26	25	25	27
MIDDLE EAST	1	1		1	3	3	2		3	4	3	3	18	14	13	14	25	22	18	18
NORTH AMERICA & CARIB-BEAN	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	16	17	14	11	41	42	42	49	61	62	61	64
OTHERS*												1	2	1	1		2	1	1	1
TOTAL	20	21	18	24	14	15	14	15	72	71	63	65	227	223	214	209	333	330	309	313

*Switzerland
Source: A/53/375, annex, Table 12, pp. 86-89.

20. The 1999 report on the composition of the Secretariat contained statistical information pertaining to the distribution of senior-level staff in 1999 by countries of nationality. Its analysis leads to some observations as presented below.

21. The distribution of senior-level posts among countries demonstrates a great degree of disparity. Nationals of only 18 Member States (less than 10 per cent of the United Nations membership) encumber 182 senior-level posts out of the total of 316 or 57.6 per cent (in 1999 nationals of these countries occupy five or more senior-level posts each). Nationals of 70 other Member States hold 134 such positions or 42.4 per cent of the total. The remaining 97 Member States, more than half of the United Nations membership, constitute the third group of countries - that of the "have-nots".

22. It is worthwhile comparing these 1999 data with those for 1995, at which time nationals also of 18 Member States, occupying five or more senior-level posts each, encumbered altogether 188 such positions out of total 331 or 56.8 per cent. Thus, it can be concluded that the degree of geographical distribution of top posts has remained stable during the last five years. This kind of stability, however, can hardly be regarded as positive.

23. The Secretary-General observes that the Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM) has amplified previous efforts to reach the largest pool of candidates possible by:

- Circulating posts at the D-1 and D-2 levels externally as well as internally;
- Publishing vacancy announcements on the Internet (which has resulted in unprecedented numbers of applicants from around the world);
- Requesting unrepresented countries to draw the attention of potential candidates to vacancy announcements;
- Conducting executive searches both by OHRM and programme managers.

Such measures help to meet the staffing needs of the Organization and to identify and attract candidates for posts at the senior and policy-making levels.[13]

1. Representation of developing countries

24. As of 30 July 1999, nationals of developing countries occupied 151 senior posts (47.9 per cent of the total number of such posts subject to geographical distribution), including 23 posts at the USG and ASG levels (57.5 per cent). By way of comparison, in 1995, the share of developing countries at senior levels overall was 47.7 per cent (158 posts) and at the ASG and USG levels 55.9 per cent (19 posts).[14] It should be noted that the distribution of senior-level posts among the developing countries within geographical groups is quite uneven.

25. As of 30 June 1999 nationals of 97 countries did not hold a single senior-level post subject to geographical distribution. The overwhelming majority of those 97 Member States are developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition.

26. Additional efforts, including targeted executive search by both OHRM and programme managers, are required to mitigate that disparity. Special consideration of the candidates from unrepresented countries for senior-level posts in the United Nations Secretariat, subject to geographical distribution, is warranted, provided that the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity is observed.

2. Representation of women

27. The Secretary-General has continued to take measures aimed at improving the gender balance in senior-level posts. In the period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1999, the number of women at the D-1 level and above increased from 57 to 92, or by 61.4 per cent. Over the period 1989-1999, the number of female staff in posts subject to geographical distribution at the D-1 level increased from 15 (6.4 per cent) to 71 (34.3 per cent); at the D-2 level from 7 (8.2 per cent) to 16 (23.2 per cent); and at the ASG level from 0 to 3 (17.6 per cent). The number of women occupying posts at the USG level in 1999 remained the same as in 1989: 2.[15] Out of 40 positions at the ASG level and above, women encumbered only five, or 12.5 per cent in 1999.[16] The Secretary-General should pay particular attention to this specific situation.

28. The Inspector observes the continuing inadequate representation of women from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The Secretary-General, within the framework of his efforts aimed at further improving gender balance at senior and policy-making levels, should place particular emphasis on equitable geographical distribution and better representation of women from developing countries as well as from countries with economies in transition. In this respect, the Steering Committee for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat, established as an advisory body to the Secretary-General, might play a positive role.[17] In applying the above measures, full regard should be paid to the relevant provisions of Articles 101 paragraph 3, and article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations.

II. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES FOR SENIOR-LEVEL APPOINTMENTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS

A. General observations

29. The appointment of senior officials is critical to the performance of the Organization. The Charter does not provide for any modality of the appointment of senior-level officials, apart from that of the Secretary-General himself, who, under Article 97, "shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council." The same article designates the Secretary-General as "the chief administrative officer" of the Organization. According to Article 101, paragraph 1, he is authorized to recruit "under regulations established by the General Assembly" (emphasis added) all Secretariat staff. This obviously includes staff serving at senior-level positions.

30. Article IV of the Staff Regulations dealing with the appointment of United Nations staff members, while repeating the well-known provisions of the Charter with regard to the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible,[18] provides, in particular, that:

- The power of appointment of staff members rests with the Secretary-General;[19]
- Selection of staff members shall be made without distinction as to race, sex or religion. So far as practicable, selection shall be made on a competitive basis;[20]
- The fullest regard shall be had, in filling vacancies, to the requisite qualifications and experience of persons already in the service of the United Nations;[21]
- Appointment of USGs and ASGs shall normally be for a period of five years, subject to prolongation or renewal.[22]

B. Appointments to the top level

1. Appointments of the Deputy Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General for IOS

31. The General Assembly decisions pertaining to appointments to the posts of DSG and USG for IOS, established in 1998 and 1994, respectively, have enhanced the role of Member States in the process of selecting United Nations top officials.

32. With regard to the appointment of the DSG, General Assembly resolution 52/12 B, section B, paragraph 2, apart from the need to observe Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, contains the following two provisions: prior consultations between the Secretary-General and Member States; and that the terms of office of the DSG "will not exceed that of the Secretary-General." As to the appointment of the USG for IOS, the General Assembly, in addition to holding prior consultations, provided that he/she shall be:

- An expert in the fields of accounting, auditing, financial analysis and investigations, management, law or public administration;
- Approved by the General Assembly;
- Removed by the Secretary-General only for cause and with the approval of the General Assembly;
- Appointed with due regard for geographic rotation.

The General Assembly also decided that the USG for IOS shall serve for one fixed term of five years without possibility of renewal.[23] In this context, it is worth noting that WGUNS encouraged the Secretary-General to consider uniform terms and term limits in his appointments to senior management posts.[24]

2. Appointments to USG and ASG levels

33. In the absence of clearly defined modalities, appointments to USG and ASG positions, as well as to those of heads of the United Nations programmes and funds, have traditionally been the personal responsibility of the Secretary-General. They fall within the discretionary power of the Secretary-General,[25] and, accordingly, are made outside the established procedures for recruitment and promotion. Therefore, neither relevant vacancy notices, nor job descriptions are published.

34. The Secretary-General reported that, in deciding on appointments at the senior and policy-making levels, he takes into account primarily the qualifications and experience of candidates for the USG, ASG and higher levels, with due importance given to considerations for equitable regional representation.[26] He also reported that, with regard to senior-level appointments, he, as and when necessary (emphasis added), consults with an informal group of independent advisers on senior appointments established in 1997, which comprises prominent individuals who are familiar with the United Nations system.[27] Previously, the Secretary-General had expressed his determination to seek the widest possible spectrum of views to ensure that his appointments are of the highest calibre and to continue to benefit, for this purpose, from consultations with Member States on such appointments.[28]

35. Comparison of the policies established for appointments at the top echelon in the United Nations Secretariat suggests that:

- Only in the cases of the DSG and the USG for IOS, consultations with Member States are formally required (although the format of these consultations has not been specified);
- Only the appointment of the USG for IOS requires the General Assembly's approval;
- Only with regard to the USG for IOS the procedure for removal is established;
- Only for the DSG and the USG for IOS the terms of office were clearly indicated.

As to application of the principle of geographical distribution, "due regard for geographic rotation" has been mentioned only in relation to the appointment of the USG for IOS.

36. Over the years, the General Assembly has repeatedly stated that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States, including at the highest level.[29] However some top-level positions, including those at the USG level continue to be the exclusive preserve of some Member States. It is advisable that the Secretary-General, while considering candidates for senior-level appointments, should pay a special attention to this issue.

37. An analysis of recent General Assembly resolutions on personnel matters and of the relevant statements of Member States leads to three major conclusions. First, Member States are concerned with the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity of United Nations top echelon officials. Second, Member States are placing an enhanced emphasis on elimination of "exclusive preserves" and ensuring the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, either through rotation of the relevant officials or through limiting their terms of office. Third, they wish more transparency of selection and recruitment of top level officials.

38. With regard to the above mentioned positions of Member States, the Secretary-General states: "Over the years, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions and established practices, including in relation to high-level appointments, that have constrained the Secretary-General's ability to administer the Secretariat."[30] Recalling that the Charter of the United Nations and its preparatory documentation express clearly the intention that there should be a well-defined division of functions between the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, he further observes that "encroachment by either on the authority of the other undermines the efficient and effective operation of the Organization."[31]

39. By adopting resolutions and establishing procedures relating to senior-level appointments, the General Assembly has exercised its legitimate rights and prerogatives. Indeed, Article 10 of the Charter stipulates that "the General Assembly may discuss any questions or any matters . . . relating to the powers and functions of any organs" provided for therein, which include the Secretariat. Moreover, Article 101, paragraph 1, of the Charter does not preclude the General Assembly from establishing new regulations, which may obviously involve possible new criteria and modalities for recruitment of staff to the Organization, including senior-level staff. The General Assembly confirmed this principle in its resolution 53/221, section I, paragraph 3, pointing out the possibility of proposals on the reform of human resources management which may require an amendment of the Staff Regulations and Rules or a departure from provisions of prior Assembly resolutions. Such proposals shall be submitted to the Assembly for its consideration and approval before their implementation.

40. The Inspector suggests three measures to be taken with regard to appointments at the USG and ASG level. First, prior to making such appointments, the Secretary-General should consult thereon with Member States on a broader basis. It will be recalled in this regard that in some United Nations system organizations, senior officials are appointed by their executive heads in consultation with or upon nomination by an appropriate legislative body.

41. Second, the terms of office of USG and ASG should be specified. The Inspector believes that appointment of USGs and ASGs should normally be for an initial period of up to five years, subject to prolongation or renewal so that the total term of office should not exceed ten years. Third, the Secretary-General should advise in advance Member States of vacancies at the levels of USGs and ASGs as well as of responsibilities related to these positions and qualifications required from candidates.

C. Appointments to the D-2 level

42. Currently, vacancy notices for D-2 positions are circulated both internally and externally. This allows due consideration to be given to the career development of Secretariat staff under staff regulation 4.4 and the possibility of bringing in "new talents" from outside.

43. Efficiency of the United Nations Secretariat greatly depends on the performance of its Directors. The Directors should help the Secretary-General to create an organizational environment that allows all staff to contribute to their maximum potential. Therefore, in the context of human resources management reform, it is vitally important to take measures aimed at reviewing and streamlining selection criteria and modalities of appointment of staff at the D-2 level.

44. In selecting candidates, emphasis should be placed on identifying those who are achievement oriented and possess proven managerial competencies and leadership skills. The possibility should exist for replacing under-performing staff of this category. With this purpose in

mind, the Inspector believes it is important that newly-recruited staff at the D-2 level or holders of fixed-term appointments selected for such posts should be granted initial contracts for periods not exceeding five years. At least six months before the expiration of the initial contract of such a staff member, the position should be advertised both internally and externally. The incumbent should be allowed to present his/her candidacy for the post on the same basis as all other candidates.

45. The Inspector considers it advisable to request the Secretary-General to provide in his report on the composition of the Secretariat information on D-2 appointments, including nationality, gender, type of contract (new or renewed).

1. Senior Review Group and its terms of reference

46. Appointments to the D-2 level are made on the advice of a Senior Review Group (SRG), which was established by the Secretary-General in 1991 to serve a threefold purpose:

- To provide the Secretary-General with more structured advice in the consideration of candidates;
- To ensure consistent implementation of personnel policies and recruitment guidelines;
- To satisfy members aspiring to such posts that their candidacies are given adequate consideration.

47. SRG consists of four officials at the USG or ASG level. One is the Chairperson of the Appointment and Promotion Board (APB), another represents the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG), the third is appointed in consultation with the staff, and the fourth, serving ex-officio, is the ASG for Human Resources Management (HRM).

48. According ST/AI/392 of 27 January 1994, SRG procedures provide that:

- Prior to the submission of any recommendation for an appointment, the head of the department concerned should request OHRM to circulate a vacancy announcement;
- Depending on the circumstances of the case, the head of the department concerned, in consultation with the ASG for HRM, may decide to advertise the vacancy internally only, or internally and externally; in exceptional circumstances, however, SRG may decide not to advertise a post;
- After initial screening by OHRM to establish basic eligibility, applications received are forwarded to the head of the department concerned for evaluation;
- After reviewing the applications, the head of the department will forward a recommendation to the ASG for HRM, who will present it to SRG;
- It is the responsibility of SRG to ensure that all qualified candidates are given due consideration;
- If a vacancy announcement has initially been circulated internally only and SRG concludes that there is no internal candidate fully qualified for the post, it may recommend that the post be advertised externally;
- After deliberation, SRG prepares a short list of all fully qualified candidates and submits it to the Secretary-General for a final decision;
- Should the names put forward by SRG not include the candidate recommended by the department concerned, the recommendations of SRG, together with the views of the department's head are forwarded to the Secretary-General for a decision.

It needs to be added that SRG terms of reference provide that the Secretary-General, at his discretion, may request it to review candidates for senior management positions at the levels higher than D-2.

2. Review of SRG files

49. During the period from 1 January 1995 to 7 June 1999, SRG held 38 meetings. Its notes are maintained in the OHRM. The proceedings of the meetings are not recorded. The results of the analysis of SRG files covering the above period are presented below.

50. The review suggests that, during the above period, 81 appointments were made to D-2 level posts. Out of this number 22 external candidates (or 27 per cent of the total) were recruited. None of them was seconded by his or her respective Government. Internal candidates were either promoted to a higher level post or promoted in-post. In-post promotion was either related to the fact that the incumbents were placed on D-2 posts with their D-1 grade or resulted from the reclassification of the posts they had been occupying to the D-2 level.

51. As follows from the examination of the files, SRG, without considering the relevant cases, only took note of the Secretary-General's decision to appoint ten United Nations officials.

52. Otherwise, announcements for vacant posts are, generally, published for both external and internal candidates and placed on the Internet. Only one vacancy announcement was placed in the *International Herald Tribune* and *The Economist* magazine.

53. Many of the vacancy announcements elicited hundreds of applications. Thus 406 applications were

submitted for the post of the Director of the Electronic Services Division, OCSS; and 346 applications for the post of the Director of the Division of Sustainable Development, DESA. In some of these cases, department heads (e.g. DESA, UNCTAD) established either special review or advisory panels to screen the applications and assist them in evaluating the candidates. An inter-agency selection team was established to review candidates for the post of the Director of the International Computing Centre (ICC).

54. It is worth mentioning that in only one case SRG did not agree with the recommendation of the head of the department concerned to promote a staff member to a D-2 post and recommended another candidate to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General agreed with the SRG recommendation. In another case, SRG invited the head of a department to comment personally on the proposed candidate and only after receiving his clarifications was SRG able to support the candidate he had recommended.

55. On the other hand, the Secretary-General turned down two recommendations of SRG, both advising him to recruit external candidates. In one of these cases, the Secretary-General appointed an internal candidate as a Director of Division, despite the fact that the latter had been found by the Departmental Panel as having "not yet demonstrated the level of leadership required for a position of this nature."

56. In several cases, the Secretary-General's Executive Office drew the attention of the Chairperson of SRG to the lack of information on the candidates submitted for the Secretary-General's approval. The Inspector would like to observe that SRG, in contrast to APB, has no standardized form of reporting, neither has it a list of the documentation required for its consideration of candidates. SRG files definitely need to be better organized not only for easy reference but also because of the fact that they constitute a part of the Organization's institutional memory.

57. Finally, the Inspector has established that, during the 1995-1999 period, the Secretary-General only once requested SRG to review candidates for an ASG position.

D. Appointments to the D-1 level

58. During the period from 1 January 1995 to 31 May 1999, 155 appointments were made to D-1 level posts. Only 38 or 24.5 per cent of those constituted recruitment of external candidates. There is no evidence in the files of APB of any recruitment on the basis of secondment. Currently, vacancy notices for D-1 positions should be circulated internally and externally under the vacancy announcement system, except for cases when either the Secretary-General uses his discretionary powers of appointment or in-post promotion.

59. However, there were cases of non-competitive process of selecting and appointing candidates to D-1 positions. In its Judgement No. 914, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal (UNAT) found that non-circulation of two vacant D-1 posts in OHRM constituted a disregard of proper procedures which "was detrimental to the Applicants' career development, and caused the frustration and mental anguish of not being considered for posts for which they might be qualified." Accordingly, UNAT ordered the Respondent to pay to each of the two applicants compensation of 18 months of her/his salary. The Tribunal was compelled to add that "this is such a serious case of maladministration that consideration should be given to invoking Staff Rule 112.3 which provides that "Any staff member may be required to reimburse the United Nations either partially or in full for any financial loss suffered by the United Nations as a result of the staff member's negligence or of his/her having violated any regulation, rule or administrative instruction."

60. It will be recalled that such a recommendation (Recommendation III) was made in the JIU report entitled "Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement, and promotion policies (Part II. Placement and Promotions)."[32] That recommendation subsequently became paragraph 3 of section II of General Assembly resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997.

1. APB and its terms of reference

61. The procedures for D-1 level appointments, which are made upon APB recommendations, are the same as those applied to lower level staff in the Professional category.

62. The Secretary-General reports that APB is fully informed of the representation of Member States in the Secretariat when reviewing the cases submitted for advice and that OHRM ensures that special attention is given by these advisory bodies to candidates from unrepresented and under-represented nationalities.

2. Review of APB files

63. The Inspector reviewed all the APB files dealing with appointments to the D-1 level in 1999, the files for the period 1995 were chosen for inspection at random. The Inspector notes a high quality of the files, testifying to the meticulous work of the APB secretariat. As a general rule, the following documentation is attached to the presentation of a candidate:

(a) Vacancy announcement and classified job description of the post;

(b) Report of the Departmental Panel;

(c) Comparative evaluation worksheets of all applicants;

(d) Application, fact-sheet and the latest performance appraisal reports of the applicant;

(e) Tables showing:

(i) Current vacancies at the level of the advertised post;

(ii) Posts at that level soon to become vacant;

(iii) Posts at the level of the post under review which are encumbered at a lower level.

64. As follows from the examination of the APB files, on quite a number of occasions, APB insisted on having additional information related to the qualification and performance of candidates and spared no efforts to achieve standardization of the information submitted to it, which not only made the work of APB easier, but it also provided a more consistent and objective comparison of candidates.

65. Examination of APB files also reveals that it has encountered on various occasions inconsistencies between the vacancy announcement, job description and requirements used by the department to evaluate the candidates for the post. In its report entitled "Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement, and promotion policies,"[33] JIU emphasized that vacancy announcements and job descriptions should be consistent in describing job functions and qualifications. It is also important to ensure that vacancy announcements should be as specific as possible in describing the functions and requirements of a vacant post.

66. The Inspector shares the view that requirements not stated in the vacancy announcement or job description should not be used to assess the candidates. After the vacancy announcement is issued, departments should not be able to change the requirements based on the qualifications of the applicants for the vacancy. This would avoid "tailor-made" vacancy announcements.

3. Appointment practices

67. The Inspector observes that APB drew the attention of OHRM to the continuing practice of excessive temporary incumbency. General Assembly resolution 51/226[34] and ST/AI/413 notwithstanding, staff are often temporarily assigned to a vacant post for a significant period of time (sometimes years) before promotion is possible. By the time the case reaches the appointment and promotion bodies, it is difficult to refuse promotion to the incumbent because that person has gained the required experience in the functions of the post. In cases where a post has been encumbered, the department should indicate that other staff members are given an equal opportunity to perform the functions of the post.

68. On three occasions in 1999, APB disagreed with the recommendations for D-1 appointments made by the heads of the relevant departments and offices. In one of these cases, the Secretary-General approved the recommendation of the head of the department. In another case, on the contrary, the APB recommendation was approved. In the third case, the decision was taken to readvertise the post.

E. Special representatives, envoys and related positions

69. In paragraphs 1 to 3 of its resolution 50/219 of 3 April 1996, the General Assembly, having taken note of the Secretary-General's report on special representatives, envoys and related positions and having endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the related ACABQ report, reiterated that the number of special envoys, special representatives and other special high-level positions should be kept to a minimum, that their functions and responsibilities should be more clearly defined and streamlined, avoiding any possible duplication, and that current financial regulations and budgetary procedures should be fully complied with.

70. Currently, the following three categories of special representatives, envoys and related officers are employed by the United Nations:

(a) Special representatives and other high-level officials in peace-keeping or observer missions authorized by the Security Council (category A);

(b) Envoys and other representatives appointed to assist the Secretary-General in the exercise of his good offices and related functions (category B);

(c) Other special high-level officials, including special advisers to the Secretary-General (category C).

71. As of 31 July 1996 (the relevant information for 1997-1998 was unavailable at the time of data collection for the report), 33 officials in the categories of special representatives, envoys and related officers were employed by the United Nations. More specifically, in category A, five officials served at the USG level and 11 at the ASG level. In category B, eight officials were employed at the USG level, one at the ASG level, and two at the D-2 level. In category C, five officials served at the USG level and one at the ASG level.

72. In its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session ACABQ observed that the principle of selecting these officials "on as wide a geographical basis as possible", reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/120, was far from being applied.

73. In the absence of official data for 1998 and 1999, the Inspector obtained from OHRM a list of names of special representatives, envoys and other high-level officials (by country of nationality and grade) employed by the United Nations as of September 1999. According to these data, in 1999 there were 60 such officials, including 23 USGs, 16 ASGs and 21 at the D-2 level. As for geographical

representation, 18 came from Western Europe, 13 from Africa, 10 from North America and the Caribbean, 8 from Asia and the Pacific, 6 from Eastern Europe, 4 from Latin America, and 1 from the Middle East. The distribution of these posts among nationalities within regional groups was rather uneven. Thus, in the group of Western Europe, out of 18 positions, 13 were held by nationals of 4 Member States. In the case of North America and the Caribbean, out of 10 positions, 9 were encumbered by nationals of 2 North American countries; and in that of Asia, out of 8 positions, 5 were occupied by nationals of only 2 countries.

74. The data made available to the Inspector also suggests that there were only two women, or 3.3 per cent, among the special representatives, envoys and incumbents of related positions in 1999.

F. Appraisal of senior-level officials

75. While none of the appointments to the top echelon posts has been officially acknowledged as a mistake or failure, authoritative United Nations analysts recognize, however, that "the performance of the top echelon over the years has been uneven."[35] The Inspector reviews the status of appraisal of the staff at D-1 posts and above in the United Nations Secretariat to the extent that high performance is a sine qua non condition for the appointment and promotion of staff to senior-level posts.

76. It will be recalled that PAS came into use in the Organization pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/222 A of 23 December 1994, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to introduce a new performance appraisal system that would hold managers and staff accountable for their individual performance. In accordance with staff rule 112.6, PAS applies to all staff members, up to and including USGs, holding appointments of at least one year under the 100 series of Staff Rules.

77. In its resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the findings of the review of the first cycle of PAS. Subsequently, the Secretary-General submitted a report on the implementation of PAS[36] in which he reviewed the first full year of implementation and outlined the modifications being made to improve the system in the light of feedback received from staff and management throughout the Secretariat. By its resolution 52/219, the Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to refine and simplify the system, in particular its administrative aspects, and reiterated the importance of PAS being implemented consistently throughout the Secretariat so as to achieve an effective and fair performance management and staff development tool. The Secretary-General was requested to monitor the application of the performance appraisal system and to report thereon to the Assembly.

78. In response to the latter request, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a progress report[37] which was intended to provide it with information on the development and implementation of PAS since his previous report, including actions taken pursuant to Assembly resolution 52/219. It provides information on the measures taken to refine and simplify the performance appraisal system, in particular its administrative aspect. It also contains a section entitled "Status of implementation of the Performance Appraisal System in the Organisation." However this section is limited to stating only that "14 departments and offices have reported that they have implemented PAS during two cycles, 6 have implemented PAS during one cycle, and the remaining 7 are commencing implementation in 1998."[38] This information is not sufficient since neither the names of those departments and offices are mentioned, nor the percentage, nor grade of staff covered by PAS.

79. For the purposes of the present report, the Inspector queried OHRM about the actual status of the appraisal of senior staff in the Secretariat. The information provided is represented in Table 2 above. The table suggests that, to date, 20 departments and offices have implemented PAS during its first (1996-1997) and second (1997-1998) cycles. Specifically, these departments and offices are: DESA (DDSMS, DESIPA, DPCSD), DGAACS, OHRM, DPA, DPI, DPKO, ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, OIOS, OLA, UNCHS, UNCTAD, UNDCP, UNEP, UNOG, UNON, UNOV. Nine departments and offices commenced PAS in 1998 or 1999. They include: DDA, OCSS, DM/OUSG, OCHA, OIRP, UNCHR, UNJSPF, OPPBA, EOSG.

80. The table also suggests that, since the implementation of PAS, only one USG and one ASG had been appraised: the former within the 1996-1997 cycle only. As for staff at the Director and Principal Officer levels, the number of those appraised and non-appraised, as well as explanatory comments are given in the respective columns of the table.

81. One general conclusion may be drawn from the information provided on senior staff appraisal, namely that PAS is still far from being universally applied to United Nations staff. In section VI, paragraph 1, of its resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General "to ensure that the performance appraisal system is applicable to all staff within the meaning of Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations."

82. In his bulletin of 15 December 1999,[39] the Secretary-General promulgated that, as from 1 January 2000:

"*1.1 PAS as established in ST/AI/1999/14 is applicable to all staff members, including those at the level of Assistant Secretary-General and above.*

"*1.2. In appraising the performance of senior officials reporting directly to him, at the Assistant Secretary-General level and above, the Secretary-General may make his comments on performance in a manner which he deems appropriate.*"

Table 2: Status of appraisal of the Secretariat senior staff under PAS system (1996 - 1998)

DEPARTMENT		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		REMARKS
		yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	
HEADQUARTERS										
DESA (DDSMS, DESIPA, DPCSD)	1996-1997	--	--	1	0	5	6	20	9	2 D-2 and 4 D-1 posts vacant
	1998	--	--	1	1	4	6	21	8	3 D-2 and 5 D-1 posts vacant
DGAACS	1996-1997									Appraisals being completed
	1997-1998									
OHRM	1996-1997	N/A	N/A			3	0	4	0	Appraisals being completed
	1997-1998	N/A	N/A			3	0	4	0	
DPA	1996-1997	0	1	0	2	6	3	12	2	
	1997-1998	0	1	0	2	2	5	8	7	
DPI	1996-1997	0	0	0	1	2	1	8	1	ASG and 1 D-1 not appraised due to changes in leadership
	1997-1998	0	0	0	1	1	1	9	1	
DPKO	1996-1997	0	1	0	2	0	4	8	3	
	1997-1998	0	1	0	2	0	4	8	3	
OIOS	1996-1997	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	0	
	1998-1999	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	0	
OLA	1996-1997	--	--	--	--	4	0	4	0	In 1997-1998, 1 D-2 assigned to OHCR by SG, therefore, OLA did not file PAS for him
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	3	1	6	0	
OFFICES AWAY FROM HEADQUARTERS										
UNOG	1996-1997									No information submitted
	1997-1998									
UNCHS	1996-1997	--	--	0	1	1	1	1	2	
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	0	2	0	2	Appraisals being completed
UNEP	1996-1997	1	0	0	1	4	5	15	13	Appraisals being completed
	1997-1998	0	1	0	1	0	9	1	26	Appraisals being completed
UNON	1996-1997	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Did not exist.
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	1	Appraisals being completed
UNOV/UNDCP	1996-1997	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	1	2	1	4	
ECA	1997					0	1	0	1	Appraisals in progress for 9 staff, full PAS implementation began in 1998. Appraisals in process of completion
	1998					0	1	0	8	
ECE	1996-1997	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	0	1 D-1 not appraised (recruited near cycle end)
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	0	1	8	1	1 D-1 not yet appraised; EOD was November 1998
ECLAC	1996-1997	0	1	--	--	1	0	10	0	No PAS for former Executive Secretary (retired December 1997); 1997-1998 appraisals in process of completion
	1997-1998	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
ESCAP	1996-1997	0	1	--	--	--	--	2	5	D-2 post vacant from 1/8/96 to 7/10/97. In 1996-1997, PERs done for 4 D-1 staff
	1997-1998	0	1	--	--	--	--	1	5	
ESCWA	1996-1997	0	1	--	--	1	0	4	0	
	1997-1998	0	1	--	--	1	0	5	0	
UNCTAD	1996-1997	0	1	0	0	0	4	3	13	Appraisals pending for D-1 and D-2 staff
	1997-1998	0	1	0	1	0	4	2	12	2 D-2 ineligible for 1998 PAS (EOD late 1998)

IV. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES FOR SENIOR-LEVEL APPOINTMENTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS MAJOR PROGRAMMES AND FUNDS

A. UNDP

83. As of 31 October 1999, apart from the Administrator, UNDP top echelon staff comprised: 1 Associate Administrator (USG), 8 Assistant Administrators (ASG), 57 D-2 and 149 D-1 officials. Forty-eight UNDP senior-level officials (22.2 per cent) were women. The total of 215 senior-level posts were encumbered by nationals of 67 countries belonging to all geographical regions. In 1999, 11 Member States had nationals occupying 5 or more senior-level posts, in total 114, or 52.8 per cent of all such posts.

84. The UNDP Administrator is appointed by the Secretary-General, after consultation with the UNDP Governing Council, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The Associate Administrator (USG level) is appointed by the UNDP Administrator in consultation with the Secretary-General. All appointments of UNDP staff members up to the D-2 level are made by the Administrator under a delegation of authority from the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The general principles followed by UNDP in selecting its staff are those contained in the relevant provisions of the Staff Regulations as well as in the "Charter on UNDP Personnel Policies and Practices." Appointments are made after consideration of the recommendation of the UNDP/UNFPA Appointment and Promotion Board. It considers cases related to fixed-term appointments of one year or more of staff in the Professional and higher categories from P-1 through D-1 under the 100 series; and fixed-term appointments of 13 months and more of staff in the 200 series (L-1 to L-6).

85. For the review of UNDP staff, the Board consists of five members and five alternates drawn from UNDP staff.

86. When a D-2 post becomes or is expected to become vacant, an internal announcement of the vacancy is publicized by e-mail to all internal UNDP staff members, eligibility being limited to those staff members at the P-5 level and above. If the position is a Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator position, the following steps are taken:

- The post is advertised to JCGP/ACC members and nominations reviewed by the management of regional bureaux;
- Based upon reference checks and the assessment of the bureaux, JCGP/ACC candidates are invited for a panel interview;
- Candidates are assessed on the basis of the competencies for the position.

87. As part of the selection process, UNDP has recently introduced a new evaluation system for candidates to Resident Coordinator posts. This system requires all such candidatures to be submitted for independent assessment. Assessments are made by an external firm and based on a set of defined competencies. The new system is applied to some 130 offices. About 100 United Nations staff members have passed through this process.

88. At a meeting of senior management chaired by the Administrator, all candidates are reviewed for the D-2 post and a management preference identified. The selection of a candidate for the post is made further to these consultations.

89. In the event that no suitable internal candidate is identified, a decision to proceed with external recruitment is made. The sourcing of external candidates may be through such means as advertisements in appropriate journals, executive search, networking with key institutions and professional associations, the hiring of a consultant. All the applications received are screened on the basis of competencies and a short-list of candidates identified for panel and/or one-on-one interviews.
Based upon interview results and reference checks, a candidate for the post is selected. The appointment of all D-2 staff members must be approved by the Administrator.

B. UNICEF

90. As of 30 June 1999, UNICEF had 84 senior-level posts which comprised: the Executive Director (USG), two Deputy Executive Directors (ASG), 27 Directors, including 10 directors of the headquarters divisions, 8 regional directors, 6 directors of country offices, 1 special advisor, 1 senior advisor, and the Director of the International Child Development Centre. There are also 54 officials at the D-1 level. All the posts at USG, ASG and D-2 levels and 53 posts at the D-1 level are funded from core voluntary contributions as a part of the UNICEF support budget approved for the 1999-2000 biennium. One D-1 post is financed from other resources related to reimbursements. Thirty staff at the D-1 level and above, or about 30 per cent, are women.

91. UNICEF argues that although its posts are not subject to geographical distribution, it strives to ensure a reasonable geographical balance of staff at all levels. The analysis of the relevant data shows, however, that out of 27 posts at D-2 level, 21 were filled by nationals of developed countries. Thirteen officials came from Western Europe, seven from North America, six from Asia and the Pacific, one official was a national of a non-Member State. Three geographical regions (Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East) were not represented at all at those levels.

92. The UNICEF Executive Director, who holds the rank of Under-Secretary-General, is appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the UNICEF Executive Board. In accordance with the existing rules and procedures, UNICEF Deputy Executive Directors (ASG) are appointed by the Secretary-General upon recommendation from the Executive Director. Division and Regional Directors, Deputy Regional Directors, Representatives, Assistant Representatives and other Heads of office, are approved by the Executive Director following review by the Senior Staff Review Committee (SSRC). This consists of the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, Comptroller, Director and Deputy Director of the Division of Human Resources, Director of Programme Division, and Director of the Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning. Regional Directors also participate whenever they are in New York (usually three to four times a year), otherwise they are consulted for views. The Chief of the Career Development Section serves as an ex-officio non-voting member.

93. All new posts, posts vacated or to be vacated following the reassignment or separation of the incumbent, and upgraded posts up to and including D-2/L-7 levels are normally advertised in a Vacancy Bulletin which is issued twice a month, distributed worldwide and posted on the UNICEF intranet site. When it is not possible to fill a vacant post with an internal candidate, a decision is made to proceed with external recruitment.

94. The main criteria as per SSRC terms of reference are: the ability of the candidate to fulfil the requirements of the post; background of academic preparation and work experience; versatility in handling related assignments; ability to assume administrative and managerial responsibilities; quality of past and current performance; and potential. When reviewing candidates, the SSRC also pays special attention to: candidates needing placement; linguistic ability; maintaining an appropriate geographic and gender balance at the international professional level as well as within particular regions and offices; and overall needs of the office.

C. UNFPA

95. As of November 1999, UNFPA had 37 senior level posts compromising: the Executive Director (USG), 2 Deputy Executive Directors (ASG), 8 Directors (D-2) and 26 Principal Officers (D-1) of which 18 are in the field. Thirty-eight per cent of senior staff are women. As to geographical distribution, in 1999, nationals of the European countries held 11 such posts, those of the Asian and Pacific region countries – 9, of African countries – 6, of North America – 5, and of the Arab and Latin American countries, 3 each. All these posts are financed from the regular budget.

96. The UNFPA Executive Director is appointed by the Secretary General at the USG level after consultation with the UNFPA Executive Board. The 2 Deputy Executive Directors (ASG) are appointed by the Secretary General upon recommendation from the Executive Director. Positions at the D-2 level are advertised and candidates are selected and appointed by the Executive Director. Positions at the D-1 level are advertised and candidates are reviewed and selected through an internal selection procedure.

97. All professional level appointments up to and including the D-1 level are made by the Executive Director, based on the recommendation of the UNDP/UNFPA APB. The Board considers cases related to fixed- term appointments of 1 year or more and conducts the annual promotion review for staff in the professional category from P-1 to D-1. For the review of UNFPA staff the Board consists of 4 UNFPA staff at the P-5 level or above and 2 UNDP staff.

D. UNHCR

98. UNHCR counts 33 senior staff who include: the High Commissioner (USG), 2 officials at the ASG level (one of them is the Deputy High Commisssioner), 12 officials at the D-2 level (two of them are financed from the regular budget and 10 from extrabudgetary resources), and 20 officials at the D-1 level (10 of these are financed from the regular budget and another 10 from extrabudgetary resources). Fifteen posts at D-1 level and above are occupied by women.

99. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/141, the High Commissioner for Refugees is appointed by the Secretary-General, subject to approval by the General Assembly. The appointment of his/her Deputy is governed primarily by paragraph 14 of the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,[40] which specifies that: "[t]he High Commissioner shall appoint, for the same term, a Deputy High Commissioner of a nationality other than his own." Paragraph 15 (*a*) of the Statute also provides that "[w]ithin the limits of the budgetary appropriations provided, the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner shall be appointed by the High Commissioner and shall be responsible to him in the exercise of their functions."

100. Effective 1 January 2000, UNHCR introduced a new approach to the posting of staff in the Professional and higher categories. The emphasis is placed on a more proactive role for the staff member, a more direct involvement by managers in the selection of candidates, a more professional matching of staff profiles to the requirements of the post, and a strengthened oversight role for the Appointments, Promotions and Postings Board (APPB).

101. The provisions of the new system relating to the selection of candidates for D-1 level, Representatives and other country-level representational posts state that:

- An Advisory Board for Senior Postings (ABSP) will be formed, comprising all Directors, the Deputy and the Assistant High Commissioner. Based on short-lists prepared by the Human Resources Service (HRS), this body will advise the High Commissioner, through the APPB, on the selection of candidates for all posts at the D-1 level and for country-level representational posts at any level (such as Representative, Chief of Mission, Senior Liaison Officer). It will also support the High Commissioner and HRS in defining evolving human resources competencies and staffing profiles required to assure the accomplishment of organizational objectives.

- An independent management assessment programme will be used to assess staff aspiring to posts of Representative, Head of Office/Desk, Section Chief, etc. This would provide the ABSP with additional objective information which would be used as a basis for evaluating the multidisciplinary skills of candidates in such areas as management, leadership, communications, external relations, human resources (HR) and financial competence. This programme is intended to be part of an organization-wide HR planning function that will be used to identify and develop managerial potential through training programmes which should be mandatory before a posting at the D-1 or country representational level.

- As a transitional measure, for all staff assigned to posts at the D-1 level and as Representatives or equivalent during the year 2000 who have not previously had the opportunity of undertaking such training, that training must be undertaken within one year of a posting to a higher level post.

102. Also proposed that effective 1 January 2000, UNHCR adopted the Rank-in-Post promotion system for staff in the Professional and National Officer categories as well as for staff at the D-1 level. This means that promotion to the next higher level will normally occur when a staff member has been assigned to, and has satisfactorily performed the full functions of, the higher level post following a probationary period of 12 to 18 months.

E. UNCHS

103. UNCHS has nine senior-level posts: two D-2, two D-1 and five L-6 posts. Only field posts are financed from extrabudgetary resources. All appointments at the D-1 and D-2 levels are made in accordance with the 100 series of the United Nations Staff Rules. The appointments on the L posts are made in accordance with the 200 series of the United Nations Staff Rules.

F. UNEP

104. UNEP senior staff include: the Executive Director (USG), Deputy Executive Director (ASG), 5 officials at the D-2 level, and 28 officials at the D-1 level. Only the USG, two D-2 and two D-1 posts are financed from the regular budget. Five UNEP officials at the D-1 and above posts are women.

105. The Executive Director is elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General (resolution 2997 (XXVII) section II, of 15 December 1972). The appointment of UNEP staff against extra-budgetary resources up to the D-1 level are reviewed by APB (Nairobi) and approved by the Executive Director of UNEP, whereas, the appointments of UNEP senior staff against regular budget are reviewed by APB (New York) and approved by the Secretary-General. All appointments at the D-2 level and above are reviewed by SRG and approved by the Secretary-General.

G. WFP

106. WFP senior-level staff comprise: the Executive Director (USG), Deputy Executive Director (ASG), Assistant Executive Director (ASG), 11 D-2 and 42 D-1. Out of a total 56 senior posts only 4 D-1 posts are financed from extrabudgetary resources. Fourteen senior-level posts are held by women. As for geographical distribution, as of 17 September 1999, 18 posts at the D-1 level and above were held by nationals of North American countries, 17 from Western Europe, seven from Asia, six from Africa, four from Latin and Central America, and four from Oceania. Nationals of one Member State had 13 such posts, and nationals of 6 other countries held from 2 to 5 posts each. Two regions (Eastern Europe and the Middle East) were not represented.

107. In accordance with the General Regulations of WFP, the Executive Director (USG) is appointed by the Secretary-General and the Director-General of FAO in consultation with the WFP Executive Board. In WFP, D-1 level staff are considered as Senior Staff, while D-2 level staff are considered as Executive Staff.

108. The procedures for appointment to the D-1 level are as follows:

- Promotion from inside is given preference;

- Usually, staff selected are promoted as a first step for the duration of assignment, which at a later date could be confirmed;

- If no suitable internal candidate is available, a Vacancy Announcement is issued;

- The Human Resources Division proceeds to pre-screen candidates meeting the required qualifications;

- Qualified candidates are interviewed by a panel of Executive Staff;

- A recommendation of short-listed candidates is sent by the interview panel to the Executive Director for decision.

109. As for the D-2 level, the candidates are selected and appointed by the Executive Director, after consultation with WFP Executive Board members. If required, a Vacancy Announcement is sent to the Member States. It may be added that all WFP staff are subject, on a yearly basis, to the Management Appraisal and Performance System, which is similar to PAS.

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110. By way of concluding, it may be observed that certain diversity exists in the modalities of senior-level appointments in the United Nations programmes and funds. At this stage, however, the Inspector does not see any compelling reason to recommend uniformity of these modalities.

111. It is also noteworthy that the geographical distribution of senior-level staff in the secretariats of the United Nations programmes and funds is very uneven. In this regard, it will be recalled that, in his 1999 report on the composition of the Secretariat, the Secretary-General specifically pointed out that the principles governing the recruitment and employment of staff, which are derived from Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations (including the necessity to pay due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible) apply to all the staff of the United Nations, including the staff of the secretariats of its subsidiary programmes, funds and organs with special status in matters of appointment.[41]

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NOTES

1. General Assembly resolution 51/226 of 25 April 1997, sect. II, para.5.
2. "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform", report of the Secretary-General A/51/950, p. 74, para. 233.
3. "United Nations reform: measures and proposals", note by the Secretariat A/52/584, para. 37.
4. ST/SGB/1999/5, regulation 4.5 (a).
5. "Renewing the United Nations . . .", op. cit., p. 74, para. 230.
6. Report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 24* (A/51/24)), annex, para. 55.
7. "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/241", report of the Secretary-General (A/52/855), para. 57.
8. A/53/375 and A/54/27.
9. A/52/7/Add.1, para. 56.
10. Report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group. . ., op. cit., annex, para. 63.
11. See note No. 9 above.
12. A/54/279, p. 11, Table B.
13. Ibid., p. 15, para. 38.
14. Ibid., p. 11, Table B.
15. Ibid., pp. 10-12, paras. 21-22 and Table D.
16. Ibid., p. 11, Table B.
17. ST/SGB/1999/9.
18. Staff Rules (see note No. 4 above), regulation 4.2.
19. Ibid., regulation 4.1.
20. Ibid., regulation 4.3.
21. Ibid., regulation 4.4.
22. Ibid., regulation 4.5.
23. General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 12 August 1994, para.5 (*b*) (iii).
24. Report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group. . . , op. cit., annex, para. 67.
25. See note No. 1 above.
26. A/53/375, para. 47.
27. Status of implementation of actions described in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform", report of the Secretary-General (A/53/676), p. 7, action 20.
28. "United Nations reform . . .", op. cit., para. 37.
29. See, for example, General Assembly resolution 51/226 of 25 April 1997, sect. III B, para.1.
30. "Renewing the United Nations . . .", op. cit., p. 19, para. 47.
31. Ibid.
32. JIU/REP/96/6, see A/51/656.
33. JIU/REP/95/1 (Part 1), see A/ 49/845.
34. General Assembly resolution 51/226 of 25 April 1997, sect. III.B, para. 10.
35. B. Urquhart and E. Childers, "A world in need of leadership: tomorrow's United Nations", Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (Uppsala, Sweden 1990), p.37.
36. A/C.5/51/55 and Corr.1.
37. "Performance management", report of the Secretary-General (A/53/266).
38. Ibid., para. 11.
39. ST/SGB/1999/18.
40. General Assembly resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, annex.
41. A/54/279, para. 10.